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HIS *MAJESTIES*

DECLARATION

TO

All his Loving Subjects, Concerning the TREASONABLE CONSPIRACY Againſt His *Sacred Perſon* and *Government* lately Diſcovered.

Appointed to be Read in all Churches and Chappels within this Kingdom.

By His MAJESTIES Special Command.

CHARLES REX.

IT hath been Our Obſervation, that for ſeveral years laſt paſt, a Malevolent party hath made it their buſineſs to promote Sedition by falſe News, Libellous Pamphlets, and other wicked Arts; whereby they endeavoured not only to render our Government odious, and our moſt faithful ſubjects ſuſpected to the People; but even to Incite them to a diſlike and hatred of our Royal Perſon: Whereupon it was evident to us, that the heads of this party could have no other aim, but the ruine of Us and Our Government.

And whilſt by our utmoſt care, we manifeſted to all our ſubjects our Zeal for the maintenance of the Proteſtant Religion, and our reſolutions to Govern according to Law; It was a great trouble to Us to find, that evil Perſons by miſrepreſenting our actions to the People, ſhould ſo far inſinuate themſelves into the Affections of the weaker ſort, as that they looked upon them as the only Patriots and Aſſertors of their Religion and liberties, and gave themſelves up entirely to their conduct.

As their Numbers increaſed, ſo did their boldneſs, to that height, that by often ſhewing themſelves in tumults and riots, and unlawful and ſeditious conventicles, they not only engaged, but proclaimed an impunity to their own party, who thought themſelves already too ſtrong for the Laws; and they ſeemed to believe, that in a ſhort time they ſhould gain upon the People, ſo as to perſwade them to a total defection from the Government.

But it pleaſed God, by theſe their Violent Wayes, to Open the Eyes of Our good Subjects, who eaſily Foreſaw what Troubles theſe Methods would Produce; And thereupon with great Courage as well as Duty and Affection towards Us, upon all Occaſions did Manifeſt their Reſolution and Readineſs in Defence of Our Perſon, and Support of Our Government, and the Religion Eſtabliſhed: And did likewiſe Convince the Common People of the Villanous Deſigns of their Factious Leaders, and the Miſeries that would befall them in purſuing ſuch Courſes.

By theſe means the Factious Party loſt Ground daily, and finding that it was impoſſible to keep up the Spirits of their Followers, againſt the Religion Eſtabliſhed, and the Laws; whilſt we were Steady in the Maintenance and Execution of them, became Deſperate, and Reſolved not to Truſt any longer to the ſlow Methods of Sedition, but to betake themſelves to Arms; not doubting, but that they remained ſtill ſtrong enough by Force to Overturn the Government which they could not Undermine.

It is hard to imagine how men of ſo many different Intereſts and Opinions, could joyn in any Enterprize; but it is certain, They readily Concurred in the Reſolution of taking Arms to Deſtroy the Government, even before they had Agreed what to ſet up in the place of it.

To which purpoſe, they took ſeveral Ways; For, whilſt ſome were Contriving a General Inſurrection in this Kingdom, and likewiſe in *Scotland*; Others Were Conſpiring to Aſſaſſinate Our Royal Perſon, and Our Deareſt Brother, and to Maſſacre the Magiſtrates of Our City of *London*, and Our Officers of State, That there might be no Appearance of Government, nor any Means for Our Subjects to Unite for their Defence.

In caſe it had pleaſed God to permit theſe wicked Deſigns to have taken Effect, There could have been nothing in Proſpect but Confuſion: For, inſtead of the Reformation they pretended, their Succeſs would have produced Diviſions, and Wars among themſelves, until the Predominant Party could have Enſlaved the reſt, and the whole Kingdom.

But

But the Divine Providence, which hath preſerved Us through the whole Courſe of Our life, hath at this time in an Extraordinary manner, ſhewed it ſelf in the Wonderful and Gracious Deliverance of Us & Our Deareſt Brother, & all Our Loyal Subjects from this Horrid & Damnable Conſpiracy.

As it is therefore Our deſire that all Our Loving Subjects ſhould joyn with Us in giving Thanks to Almighty God for this Mercy, ſo We thought it neceſſary they ſhould be now in ſome meaſure Informed of the Fact as it hath been Diſcovered to Us by undoubted Proof, and the Confeſſion of divers of the Accomplices in this Conſpiracy; whereof, though We have not as yet perfectly Traced all the Particulars, the Principal and main Deſigns of it nevertheleſs, have appeared to be as followeth.

About the beginning of *October* laſt, when the Heads of the Faction ſaw the Magiſtracy of Our City of *London* Settled in Perſons of Loyal Principles, they became impatient; and fell immediately to Conſult of Riſing in Arms; for which ſome thought their Party ſtrong enough, that they could not fail of attaining their ends whenever they ſhould break out into open force.

Whereupon there was a Meeting of ſome of the Principal Conſpirators, to Agree about the beſt means to Maſter Our Guards, and to Seize Our Perſon; but upon Conſideration, they found it neceſſary to prepare their Friends in the ſeveral Counties, as alſo the Diſaffected Party in *Scotland* to joyn with them, without which, any Attempt in Our ſaid City, or upon Our Guards, appeared too raſh to be undertaken; ſo that they laid aſide the thoughts of a preſent Riſing, and diſpoſed themſelves to find, by a Correſpondence with *Scotland*, and with ſeveral parts of this Our Kingdom, how far they might be Aſſiſted by a General Inſurrection, ſo that they might not in Human probability fail of Succeſs.

Whilſt this firſt Deſign was Forming, ſome Villains were likewiſe carrying on that Horrid and Execrable Plot of Aſſaſſinating Our Royal Perſon, and Our Deareſt Brother, in Our coming from *Newmarket*, and Money was depoſited for that purpoſe: But by the ſhortneſs of the time (We being then immediatly upon Our Return) and for want of neceſſary Preparations, they were forced to defer the Execution of it till further Opportunity.

It was then propoſed among them, Whether they ſhould Attempt the ſame at Our next going to *Newmarket* in *March* laſt? But ſome objected, That Our Guards which uſually remain here ſome time after Our Departure, would be capable of making a great Oppoſition upon the Arrival of the News. For which Reaſon, and becauſe they were not then in a ſufficient Readineſs, It was Agreed to be done at Our Return from *Newmarket*.

The place Appointed was the Houſe of one *Richard Rumbold* a Maltſter, called the *Rye*, near *Hoddeſdon* in the County of *Hertford*: And it was Reſolved, That Forty Perſons in number, who were to be Actors in this Aſſaſſination, under the Command of the ſaid *Richard Rumbold*, ſhould hide themſelves in or near the ſaid Houſe; And when our coach ſhould come over-againſt them, then Three or Four were to Shoot with Blunderbuſſes at the Poſtilion and Horſes, and if they ſhould fail of killing the Horſes, ſome were to be ready in the way, who in the Habit of Labourers ſhould Turn a Cart croſs the Paſſage, and ſo ſtop our Coach. Others were appointed to Shoot into the Coach, where our Royal Perſon, and our Deareſt Brother were to be. Others to Fire upon the Guards that ſhould be then Attending Us. And it was further Reſolved, That upon the ſame Day, Many Lords, and other Perſons of Quality, whom they ſuppoſed favourable to their Deſign, ſhould be Invited to Dine in our City of *London*, That they might be the more ready to Appear among the Citizens upon Arrival of the News. The Actors in the ſaid Aſſaſſination having Contrived the manner of their Eſcape, by nearer Paſſage than the uſual Road; By which means they hoped to get to *London* as ſoon as the News could be brought thither.

They thought it would be Eaſie upon their Perpetrating this Horrid Fact, to poſſeſs themſelves of the Government, preſuming upon the Numbers of the Diſaffected.

But leſt the Blackneſs of ſuch an Action might deter any from joyning with them, They Prepared to Palliate it, as far they could, by ſome Remonſtrance, or Declaration, which was ready to be Printed and Diſperſed in that Confuſion, to Amuſe the People. And leſt Our Officers of State, and the Magiſtrates of Our ſaid City, with the *Militia* thereof, and other Our Loyal Subjects, ſhould be able to put ſome Stop to their Carreir, They Reſolved to follow this Blow with a Maſſacre, wherein they particularly Deſigned for immediate Slaughter, Our Officers of State, the Preſent Lord Mayor, and Sheriffs, and other our Subjects that have been moſt Eminent for their Loyalty.

But it pleaſed Almighty God, by his wonderful Providence, To Defeat theſe Counſels by the ſudden Fire at *Newmarket*, which neceſſitated Our Return from thence before the time We had Appointed.

Yet theſe Villains were not thereby diſcouraged from Purſuing the ſame Bloudy Deſign, but Reſolved to take the firſt Opportunity for Effecting the ſame, and propoſed to themſelves, That it might be done either in Our Paſſage from *Windſor* to *Hampton Court*, or in Our Journey to *Wincheſter*, or when We ſhould go by Water in Our Barge, or under *Bedford* Garden Wall, as We ſhould

ſhould paſs that way, or at the Bull Feaſt, which was to be in Red-Lyon-Fields; they being informed, That We and Our Deareſt Brother had Intentions of coming thither.

And that they might be the better prepared when there ſhould be occaſion, by having a certain number of Arms lying always ready for that Purpoſe; Arms for forty men were beſpoke in all haſte, (*viz.*) Thirty Carbines with Belts and Swivels; Thirty Caſes of Piſtols, and Ten Blunderbuſſes, which were accordingly Made and Paid for.

And for the more eaſie Drawing their Party together againſt the time of Execution, they Contrived to Divide Our Cities of *London* and *Weſtminſter*, and the Suburbs, into Twenty Parts; from each of which they expected Five hundred men to be ready at the firſt Onſet; And ſome Agitators were to give an Account of the men to be furniſhed in each Diviſion, and to give out Orders to them, as there ſhould be occaſion.

And to the end the Forces they ſhould Raiſe might be the ſooner Modelled into the Form of an Army, there were One hundred Old Officers, who had been Engaged in the late Rebellion, ready in Town to take the Command of them; In the purſuit of which Project they continued, till they knew that a Diſcovery had been made unto Us.

During all this time, the Principal Conſpirators were Managing their other Deſign for a General Inſurrection in both Kingdoms.

The late Earl of *Shaftsbury*, who had at firſt Preſſed them to ſudden Riſing, which he would have had before the Seventeenth of *November* laſt, or upon that day at the fartheſt, ſent to the Conſpirators, at a Meeting appointed by them, to know their Reſolution; and finding they woud not adventure without farther Preparation, Conveyed himſelf ſecretly into *Holland*, to avoid the Danger he might be in by a Diſcovery.

His withdrawing himſelf from their Councels did not Diſcourage them from Purſuing their Deſign, onely made them more Cautious; Whereupon a new Councel was appointed of Six Perſons that were to have the Chief Management of Affairs, in Order to a General Inſurrection, by a Correſpondency with their Party in *Scotland*, and ſeveral Counties of this Our Kingdom. And becauſe a Correſpondency by Letters was thought dangerous, it was held neceſſary that ſome Perſon ſhould be ſent into *Scotland*, to Invite the Heads of the Diſaffected Party in that Our Kingdom, to come hither, under pretence of Purchaſing Lands in *Carolina*; But, in truth, to Concert with them the beſt Means for carrying on the Deſign Joyntly in both Kingdoms: And a Treaty was thereupon had with *Archibald Campbell* late Earl of *Argile*, already Attainted of Treaſon, who demanded Thirty thouſand Pounds at firſt; But afterward Agreed to accept of Ten thouſand pounds, for Buying of Arms in *Holland*, and making other Proviſions neceſſary for a Rebellion within Our Kingdom of *Scotland*.

In the ſaid Councel of Six it was Debated, Whether the Riſing in this Kingdom, ſhould be firſt in our City of *London*, where, by reaſon of the vaſt Numbers that might readily Unite, they thought they might eaſily Maſter the Guards, or rather in ſome remote Parts, whereby We ſhould be under a neceſſity of ſending Our Guards to ſuppreſs them & thereby the Riſing in Our ſaid City would become more Secure and Effectual: But at laſt it was Reſolved, as moſt convenient, That it ſhould be in all Parts at the ſame time, leſt Our City might be Defended by the *Militia* thereof, without the help of Our Guards, which We might ſend for the Suppreſſing any Inſurrection in the Countrey; And they did all diſpoſe themſelves accordingly, for the Compaſſing their Deſign, which was very near taking effect.

But ſuch was the abundant Mercy of Almighty God, while they were yet meditating their Execrable Miſchiefs againſt Our Royal Perſon, our deareſt Brother, and the Government, a Diſcovery made unto Us by one of the Accomplices, on the Twelfth of *June* laſt; ſince which time We have uſed the beſt Means We could for the Detecting, and Prevention of ſo Helliſh a Conſpiracy.

But ſo it has happened, That divers of the Conſpirators, having notice of Warrants Iſſued out for their Apprehenſion, are fled from Juſtice: *viz.* *James* Duke of *Monmouth*, the Lord *Melvin*, Sir *John Cochrane*, Sir *Thomas Armeſtrong*, *Robert Ferguſon*, who was the common Agitator Entruſted by all Parties in the ſeveral Conſpiracies, *Richard Goodenough*, *Francis Goodenough*, *Richard Rumbold* the Maltſter, *William Rumbold* his Brother, *Richard Nelthorp*, *Nathaniel Wade*, *William Thompſon*, *James Burton*, *Joſeph Elby*, *Samuel Gibbs*, *Francis Charleton*, *Joſeph Tyley*. *Caſteers*, &c. *Lobb*, both Non-Conformiſt Preachers; *Edward Norton*, *John Row*, *John Ayloff*, and *John Atherton*.

Ford Lord *Gray* being Apprehended, made his Eſcape out of the hands of a Serjeant at Arms, and *Arthur* late Earl of *Eſſex*, being Committed to the *Tower* for High Treaſon, killed himſelf.

Others have been Taken and Committed to Cuſtody, ſome of whom, *viz.* The Lord *William Ruſſel*, *Thomas Walcot*, *William Hone*, and *John Rouſe*, have upon their Trials been Convicted, Attainted, and Executed according to Law.

This We thought it fit to make known to Our Loving Subjects: that they being ſenſible (as We are)

are) of the Mercy of God in this great Deliverance, may Chearfully and Devoutly joyn with Us in Returning Solemn Thanks to Almighty God for the ſame.

For which end We do hereby Appoint the Ninth day of *September* next, to be obſerved as a Day of Thankſgiving in all Churches and Chappels within this our Kingdom of *England*, Dominion of *Wales*, and Town of *Berwick* upon *Tweed*, in ſuch manner as ſhall be by Us Directed, in a Form of Prayer with Thankſgiving, which We have Commanded to be prepared by Our Biſhops, and Publiſhed for that purpoſe.

And it is Our Pleaſure, That this Declaration be Publickly Read in all the ſaid Churches and Chappels, aswell on Sunday the Second of *September* next, as upon the Day of Thankſgiving aforeſaid.

Given at Our Court at Whitehall *the Eight and twentieth day of* July, 1683. *In the Five and thirtieth Year of Our Reign.*

AT THE COURT AT *WHITE-HALL.*

This 27th of *July* 1683.

By the Kings moſt Excellent *Majeſty*, and the Lords of his *Majeſties* moſt Honourable Privy Council.

IT *is this day Ordered by His* Majeſty *in Council*, *That this Declaration be forthwith Printed, and Publiſhed.*

PHIL. LLOYD.

Edinburgh, Re-printed by DAVID LINDSAY, 1683.